

EX PARTE OR LATE FILED

02-277
RECEIVED

From: Rob Meyer
To: Mike Powell, Kathleen Abernathy, KM KJWEB
Date: Mon, Mar 17, 2003 6:51 AM
Subject: Broadcast Regulation and Media Ownership Rules, FCC Hearings

MAR 25 2003
Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

Chairman Michael Powell, Commissioners Kathleen Abernathy and Kevin Martin Federal Communications Commission, Washington, DC

Dear Commissioners Abernathy, Martin and Powell:

I was fortunate enough to attend the FCC Field Hearing held at the University of Washington on Friday, March 7, 2003, a hearing which was held without your support, official recognition or funding by Chairman Powell. I have written Commissioners Adelstein and Copps to thank them for making the trip to Seattle and for soliciting input from the public and several professional panels, as was done in Richmond last month. I have also written my Congressional Representative and Senators to urge them to oppose what the F.C.C. is doing.

Sadly, that earlier hearing severely limited public comment, and was held with next to no notice and minimal publicity. I ask that you publicize the next hearing, to be held at Duke University later this month and that all five members of the FCC make the short trip to Durham. Currently, about three quarters of the American public are unaware that the Commission is considering a further relaxation -- or total elimination -- of longstanding rules and regulations concerning media ownership consolidation, and compliance with already weakened FCC rules and regs.

As a broadcast professional with two decades of experience, mostly in radio news but other media as well, I have opposed further loosening of media regulation since the "genie first got out of the bottle" (to paraphrase Commissioner Copps) during the Reagan Administration. I opposed the Telecom Act of 1996 which has led to unprecedented consolidation of broadcast property ownership. I have written my Senators and U.S. House Representative on these issues, and I am encouraging everyone I know to do the same, no matter which side of the issue they may prefer.

I also am asking everyone I know to join me in asking you to add hearings and attend them as a full commission, with proper notice and greater publicity. Chairman Powell has been quoted as saying that the 15,000 comments received prior to the Seattle hearing was sufficient public input. Since our nation has over a quarter of a billion citizens -- all media consumers for whom the FCC's actions have vital consequences and to whom the FCC is answerable -- I respectfully submit that 15,000 public comments is NOT representative, or complete.

The original charge of the Federal Communications Commission, to protect the Public Interest with reasonable oversight of telecommunications services and broadcast media, has been whittled away for over two decades. To consider the complete elimination of rules, regulations and requirements for those owning access to our Public Trust -- the public spectrum -- is, to me, unconscionable. Already, just four corporations control 85% of the AM and FM frequencies in Seattle. Other markets, smaller and larger, have even more extreme consolidation. The idea of "local content" in news, and other programming, is all but disappearing. Diversity of voices and thought, much less of ownership, is a thing of the past.

It is said that the Bush Administration and your Commission seek to loosen or eliminate reasonable regulation to let the "free market" work in the media marketplace. It has been shown by study upon study that "competition" has not increased; it has decreased in broadcasting and other media. The argument that the internet and cable television provide reasonable alternatives is false -- a handful of corporations control access to those services, and the number of providers is increasingly integrated into multi-media mega-corporations. It is your responsibility to ensure Diversity, Localism and Competition for media consumers, and to listen to those consumers.

I implore you to reach out to the 72% of Americans who are unaware of the Commission's plans, and I encourage you to seek major media coverage of the issue, which has been sorely lacking. Could that be

because the owners of the major TV networks and other major media corporations are those who have lobbied you and the Bush Administration most strenuously to eliminate regulation? I think so. It is my belief that the vast majority of those whom you serve are dissatisfied with the current state of radio and television, the increasing homogeneity of programming, and an unchecked increase in vulgarity, obscenity and indecency on many airwaves and cable bands. Moreover, should they become informed of your plans, I believe the vast majority will join me in opposing unfettered amalgamation of media.

If your plan is to send the F.C.C. the way of the of the I.C.C., the C.A.E. and other governmental regulatory agencies, you are doing a major disservice to the citizens to whom you should answer, and to whom you should listen. Please listen to those who pay your salaries, the citizens who rely on you to protect their Public Interest.

Thank you for your time and consideration

Sincerely,

Rob Meyer, Seattle

cc: Cong. Jay Inslee, Cong. Jim McDermott. Interested Consumers

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CC: Michael Copps. Commissioner Adelstein, George W. Bush, Maria Cantwell, Patty Murray

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From: Rob Meyer
To: Mike Copps
Date: Wed, Mar 19, 2003 4:22 PM
Subject: Re: Broadcast Regulation and Media Ownership Rules, FCC Hearings

MAR 25 2003
 Federal Communications Commission
 Office of the Secretary

Dear Commissioner Copps:

Thank you for the reply. I also e-mailed you directly through the F.C.C. website. I hope that message got to you.

These are issues of great importance to me, and many of the several score of friends, colleagues and family members whom I have shared correspondence with -- informed, educated people for the most part -- have responded saying they were unaware of the FCC's hearing(s) and upcoming contemplated actions. As I suspected, the overwhelming majority agrees with me that further media consolidation with no accountability is NOT in our best interests.

I do, indeed, hope to "tee up" a national dialogue on these issues, and would welcome any suggestions of how to further involve more people in the process. Again, thank you for your efforts, and for the reply.

Sincerely,

Rob Meyer, Seattle. WA

Mike Copps <mikecopps@fcc.gov> wrote:

Thank you for your message and your kind words about the Seattle hearing. I am very pleased to know of your involvement in the issue and that you are working to tee up a national dialogue on these important issues. Be assured of my continuing determination to do exactly that. Your involvement is appreciated

>>> Rob Meyer 03/16/03 05:25PM >>>

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 Federal Communications Commission, Washington, DC

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CC: Kathleen Abernathy, Commissioner Adelstein. Maria Cantwell, KM KJMWEB, Patty Murray, Mike Powell